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# CENTRAL RAIL ROAD.

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# REPORT

OF

THE CHIEF ENGINEER

OF THE

# DANVILLE AND POTTSVILLE

# RAIL ROAD COMPANY.

WITH

## A REPORT

OF

THE PRESIDENT AND MANAGERS

TO THE STOCKHOLDERS.

JANUARY, 1833.

PHILADELPHIA.

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1833.

## OFFICERS OF THE COMPANY.

*President.*

Thomas M. Pettit.

*Managers.*

John White,
Thomas Biddle,
Benj. W. Richards,
Joseph M. Sanderson,
Jonas Preston,
Lawrence Lewis,
Matthew Newkirk,
Charles H. Baker,
Joseph McIlvaine,
John M. Hood.

*Secretary.*

George Taylor.

*Treasurer.*

Samuel H. Carpenter.

# REPORT OF THE BOARD.

"The President and Managers of the Danville and Pottsville Rail Road Company," in communicating to the stockholders a report from their chief engineer, respectfully submit the following remarks.

The report exhibits the gratifying fact, that from the point of connexion with the Mount Carbon Rail Road, about two miles and a half northward of Pottsville, to Girardville, (a settlement commenced by the late Mr. Girard, on the waters of the Mahonoy near its confluence with the Shenandoah creek, about eleven miles from Pottsville,) difficulties which by some of our fellow citizens were deemed insurmountable, have, by the judicious application of labour directed by perseverance, energy and science, been completely overcome: and further, that with the exception of the arching of the tunnel, and two short pieces of embankment, the whole grading and masonry of the road to Girardville, will be finished early in the approaching spring.

The Company being already in possession of the iron rails, and the machinery for the inclined planes having been contracted for, and much of it expected to be soon received, the Board are confirmed by Mr. Robinson's report, in the expectation they had previously formed, that while some progress will be made beyond Girardville, the road can be completed and opened for operations between Pottsville and Girardville, by the close of the year 1833.

It is not the least gratifying part of the information now submitted, that notwithstanding that the mountainous character of the country presented obstacles, which for a time had the effect to discourage a few individuals as to the feasibility

of the project altogether; yet, that the moderate estimate furnished in 1831 has not been even reached in what has been accomplished, and that the work will be finished to Girardville at much less than that estimate.

The results so far produced, embracing as they do the greatest obstructions in the whole line from the Schuylkill to the Susquehannah—namely, the passage of the Broad Mountain, the tunnel, and six out of nine inclined planes,—demonstrate the practicability of the whole road at a cost not exceeding, and probably to a considerable extent within the original estimate, and furnish the best answer to all the distrust and uncertainty which prejudice or want of information may have suggested on the subject.

The president and several of the managers, having visited and examined the work at different times, during the last few months, were prepared from their own observation for the very satisfactory details contained in the report of the Engineer; and they deem it due to that gentleman to say, that his high professional character has been abundantly sustained by the sound judgment and eminent skill displayed in this undertaking.

The road formation has been extended several miles into the body of lands which, under Mr. Girard's will, have become the property of the City. It has been ascertained that some of the finest coal in Schuylkill county, exists in inexhaustible veins in the immediate neighbourhood of the road; and that lumber of a superior quality, of which some had been cut by Mr. Girard in his lifetime, is to be found there in large quantities. A very interesting and important question is thus presented to the citizens of Philadelphia. The corporation having succeeded Mr. Girard as the largest stockholder, has a direct inducement in this respect, to advance the interests of the Company; and as owner of the valuable lands just mentioned, has an opportunity of bringing into active employment the incalculable quantities of excellent coal and lumber which
' long to her, and of settling and improving a large region
'l suited for cultivation; while, as a great commercial city,

Philadelphia is deeply concerned in opening this communication between the Susquehannah and the Schuylkill, with a view to the immense trade to pass down this route from the *north* and *west* branches of the Susquehannah, and to the return trade, which can be conducted at the cheapest possible rate, in consequence of facilities furnished by the coal boats on their return.

The power which the Company possesses under the charter to carry on the coal trade, may perhaps be advantageously exercised, and the attention of the Board has been directed to this object. Should it, however, be found inexpedient for the Company to embark in this business, other measures will, no doubt, be adopted by those interested, by which the coal and other productions of this region can be made tributary to the comfort of the citizens and the profits of the Company.

The Stockholders having at their general meeting on the 12th of November 1831, instructed the Board "to put under contract, as soon as practicable, with a view to its speedy completion, so much of the eastern division of the rail road commencing at the point of connexion with the Mount Carbon rail road, and extending to the mouth of the Shenandoah Creek, and thence towards the Susquehannah as far as the present funds of the Company would, in the opinion of the president and managers justify;"—the Board, accordingly, made as much progress in obedience to such direction, as a judicious use of their resources would permit. The certainty that the whole road can be made as contemplated, being shown—and the sure benefits to result to the great country watered by the north and west branches of the Susquehannah, to the city of Philadelphia, and to the Stockholders, being now brought more distinctly into view, the hope is indulged, that the Company will be so sustained by public confidence and encouraged by public support, that the magnificent work under their charge will be carried through to the Susquehannah within a time so reasonable, and at an expenditure of money so moderate, that it will be an unceasing source of rejoicing that an object of such extensive practical usefulness was undertaken.

The doubts above referred to relative to the execution of the work, extended themselves, the Board are aware, to the minds of some of the Stockholders, who received impressions, that even if the road should be made, it would be at an expense far beyond the estimates furnished. Objections were consequently made by some of them in relation to the payment of instalments. As the work advanced, and information respecting it became diffused, these impressions gradually faded away; confidence returned, and payments were more promptly made. As the facts now offered prove beyond all question, that this great central road from the Schuylkill to *both branches* of the Susquehannah, is not only feasible, but that its advantages to the public, and its profits to the Stockholders, will be secured by a moderate expenditure of money; the belief is confidently entertained, that hereafter, the pecuniary requisitions made necessary by the progress of the work, will be promptly and cheerfully complied with.

By order of the Board,

T. M. PETTIT, *President.*

S. H. CARPENTER, *Secretary, pro tem.*

Office of the Company,
Philadelphia, January 28, 1833.

# REPORT OF THE ENGINEER.

*To the President and Managers of the Danville and Pottsville Rail Road Company.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present you the following report on the progress of that portion of the Danville and Pottsville Rail Road placed by me under contract, agreeably to your resolutions of the 14th of November, 1831, and of the 18th February last.

The Board are aware, that under the discretion allowed me by the last named resolution, I deemed it unadvisable to extend the contracts for grading and masonry much beyond Girardville. Between the Mont Carbon Rail Road and that point, the work of roadway-formation has been pressed on with as strong a force as the state of the Company's funds, and a judicious disposition of the labour employed seemed to warrant. The annexed paper, marked A, presents a minute estimate of the different kinds of work on each section placed under contract, of the amount of labour performed on it previous to the 20th ult., the date of the last monthly estimate, and of the amount received by each contractor on account.

It will appear from that estimate that the whole cost of grading and bridging between the Mont Carbon Rail Road and Girardville, will be $110,582 43; and that the amount of work done previous to the 20th ult. was $64,859 40. Between three and four hundred men have been since employed, and if the weather should continue favourable, will be engaged during the winter on this portion of the road. With the application of this force, it is presumed that by the first of April

the whole grading and masonry of the road to Girardville, may be completed; with the exception of the arching of the tunnel, and two short pieces of heavy embankment on sections 5 and 10.

Contracts were made in November last for some portions of the machinery of the inclined planes, and for the materials of the superstructure of the rail road for this distance. The latter will be commenced by the period of the completion of the grading and masonry; and if there should be no delay or disappointment in the delivery of materials, will be laid down in the course of the coming summer. The difficulty of procuring good workmen, and the want of forges and furnaces in the neighbourhood, makes it more difficult to specify with precision the time by which the inclined planes may be expected to be in operation. It is hoped they may be completed, and the road opened to Girardville by the close of the present year.

The excavation from the two ends of the tunnel met on the 17th of last month without the least variation. The contractors are now engaged in working out the sides and roof of full width and height, previous to the commencement of their lining and arch.

It appears from a comparison of the estimates now made in an advanced state of the roadway-formation, with my report to the Board in October, 1831, that the grading and masonry of the rail road between the Mont Carbon Rail Road and Girardville will be effected at about seven per cent. less than it was at that time estimated at. There can be little doubt that the amount allowed in the report referred to, for the machinery of the inclined planes and for superstructure, will be at least sufficient, and that the whole cost of this portion of the rail road, embracing the passage of the Broad Mountain, the tunnel, and six out of nine inclined planes, will be *within* the estimate.

All which is respectfully submitted.

M. ROBINSON, C. *E.*

*New Castle, January* 14, 1833.